

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A method for providing a custom interactive program guide (custom-
2 IPG), the method comprising:
3 receiving selections indicative of a set of channels to be included in the
4 custom-IPG;
5 rendering one or more custom-IPG screens, at a head end, having included
6 therein the set of selected channels; and
7 providing the one or more rendered custom-IPG screens from the head end
8 upon receiving a request for the custom-IPG.

1 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
2 receiving a request to view the custom-IPG on a particular channel;
3 overlaying the custom-IPG on a video sequence being provided on the
4 particular channel to generate a modified video sequence having included therein the
5 custom-IPG; and
6 providing the modified video sequence on the particular channel.

1 3. The method of claim 2, further comprising:
2 receiving a command indicative of a particular location at which to overlay
3 the one or more custom-IPG screens;
4 re-rendering the one or more custom-IPG screens at the particular location
5 indicated by the received command; and
6 providing the one or more re-rendered custom-IPG screens from the head
7 end.

1 4. The method of claim 2, wherein the custom-IPG is provided concurrent
2 with at least a portion of the video sequence being played on the particular channel.

1 5. The method of claim 2, wherein the particular channel is a channel
2 currently being viewed.

1 6. The method of claim 2, wherein the particular channel is a channel used
2 to carry regular program guide (regular IPG).

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1 7. The method of claim 2, further comprising:
2 receiving a request to turn off the custom-IPG; and
3 providing the video sequence on the particular channel without the
4 custom-IPG.

1 8. The method of claim 1, wherein the custom-IPG is provided on a
2 channel that is independent of channels used to carry regular programming and program
3 guide.

1 9. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
2 receiving a request indicating a selection for either the custom-IPG or a
3 regular IPG on a particular channel; and
4 depending on the received request, providing either the custom-IPG or the
5 regular IPG on the particular channel.

1 10. The method of claim 1, wherein each of the one or more custom-IPG
2 screens is formed as a subset of a regular IPG screen.

1 11. The method of claim 1, wherein the custom-IPG is rendered and
2 stored at the head end.

1 12. The method of claim 11, wherein the custom-IPG is stored as part of a
2 profile for a particular viewer.

1 13. The method of claim 1, wherein the custom-IPG is dynamically
2 modified and re-rendered at the head end.

1 14. A method for creating a custom interactive program guide (custom-
2 IPG), the method comprising:
3 activating a program guide customization process;
4 receiving a pop-up menu provided to assist in the customization process;
5 selecting a set of channels to be included in the custom-IPG; and

6 receiving one or more rendered custom-IPG screens having included
7 therein the set of selected channels, wherein the one or more custom-IPG screens are
8 rendered at a head end.

1 15. The method of claim 14, further comprising:
2 indicating a particular arrangement for the selected channels, and
3 wherein the one or more rendered custom-IPG screens have included
4 therein the selected channels in the indicated arrangement.

1 16. The method of claim 14, wherein the activating is achieved by
2 highlighting a particular object provided on a regular IPG screen.

1 17. The method of claim 14, wherein the activating is achieved by a key
2 depression on a remote control unit.

1 18. The method of claim 14, wherein the pop-up menu is generated at a
2 head end.

1 19. The method of claim 14, wherein the pop-up menu is overlaid on a
2 current screen being viewed.

1 20. The method of claim 14, wherein the selecting is achieved by
2 highlighting objects rendered in the pop-up menu.

1 21. A system for providing a custom interactive program guide (custom-
2 IPG), comprising:
3 a video session manager operative to receive selections indicative of a set
4 of channels to be included in the custom-IPG;
5 at least one video encoder operatively coupled to the video session
6 manager and configured to render and encode one or more custom-IPG screens having
7 included therein the set of selected channels;
8 a transport multiplexer coupled to the video encoder and operative to
9 receive the one or more encoded custom-IPG screens and generate a transport stream; and

10 a modulator coupled to the transport multiplexer and operative to receive
11 the transport stream and generate an output signal suitable for transmission, and
12 wherein the one or more custom-IPG screens are provided on the output
13 signal upon receiving a request for the custom-IPG.

1 22. A set top terminal (STT) for providing a custom interactive program
2 guide (custom-IPG), comprising

3 a demodulator operative to receive a modulated signal and generate a
4 transport stream;

5 a transport de-multiplexer coupled to the demodulator and operative to
6 receive and process the transport stream to provide one or more encoded custom-IPG
7 screens; and

8 at least one video decoder coupled to the transport multiplexer and
9 operative to receive and decode the one or more encoded custom-IPG screens to provide
10 an output video sequence, and

11 wherein the one or more custom-IPG screens are rendered at a head end
12 and sent to the STT upon receiving a request for the custom-IPG.

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